

Despatch No. 325.

AMERICAN EMBASSY,
TOKYO.

July 10, 1907.



MR. WRIGHT to the SECRETARY OF STATE.

SUBJECT: Japanese relations; copies of the resolutions of the United Chambers of Commerce of Japan; subject of the boycott of American goods; Japanese comment on the reported restriction of licenses granted to Japanese in San Francisco and the despatch of an American battleship squadron to the Pacific; confirming telegram of July 8.

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AMERICAN EMBASSY,
TOKYO.

July 10, 1907.

To the Honorable Elihu Root,
Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

Supplementing my despatch No. 314 of June 27, I have the honor to enclose herewith copies of the texts of the representations adopted by the United Chambers of Commerce of Japan for transmission to the President and to the principal Chambers of Commerce of the United States respectively. It appears that the drafts of these representations were adopted at a meeting of the representatives of the Chambers held on June 22, as reported in my previous despatch, but that the drafts were afterwards revised with the assistance of the Japanese Foreign Office and adopted in their final form on June 28. The Japan Mail calls special notice to that portion of the circular representation which speaks of the incalculable loss that would be sustained by the two countries should the development of the commerce between them be at any time obstructed as a result of the actions of one small locality. I am credibly informed that there can be no doubt that the subject of a boycott of American goods was discussed at the meetings of the representatives although it is quite probable that, in view of the relative importance of the trade to the two countries, they were brought to see that such a policy would be suicidal for Japan. The boycott of the port of San Francisco in favor of Seattle, which has been suggested, would likewise doubtless prove unfeasible owing to the strong competition that

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Full text of the resolution of the United Chamber of Commerce adopted after being revised at the F. O. No mention of boycott is made although it is generally believed that the subject was discussed.

Encl's newspaper comments and statement of the F. O. rel. to the San Francisco officials' refusal to grant licenses to Japanese employment agencies and peddlers' press comments on the reception given Gen. Kuroki in the U. S. and the enormous amount of the sending of the fleet of battleships to the Pacific.

Calls attention to complaints of the Japanese press that the British Colonies are treating Japanese immigrants as badly as the U. S. in spite of the treaty of alliance between Japan and Great Britain and encl's interview of Admiral Saka moto, in which the naval men and officers of the U. S. are represented as lacking in patriotism and efficiency.

(Encl's July 27, 1907.)

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that would develop between the rival Japanese steamship lines running to the respective ports. This explanation would account for the reply given to Mr. Consul-General Miller by the Chamber of Commerce in Yokohama, to the effect that they had no intention of boycotting American goods, -- if indeed the reply calls for any explanation.

3. On the 30 ultimo telegraphic reports were again received in Tokyo of "renewed persecutions" in the form of the refusal of the city officials of San Francisco to grant licenses to Japanese employment agencies and peddlers. These reports were at first interpreted to mean that all Japanese trade in San Francisco except that of selling merchandise would be suspended, and called forth another round of protest against "unfair obstruction of Japanese trade", "violation of treaty rights" and the "systematic policy of persecution against the Japanese" adopted by the municipality of San Francisco.

4. The Foreign Office gave out a statement to the effect that the reports so far received did not warrant the Japanese Government in regarding the matter as a diplomatic question. Such was also the opinion of the editor of the Nichi Nichi Shimbun (Mr. Kato Takaaki, ex-Minister for Foreign Affairs).

5. Even General Kuroki's return from the United States (reported in my despatch No. 321 of July 5) was made the occasion of an appeal by the Asahi to the American people to extend to Kuroki's compatriots something of the same warmth of feeling with which they had welcomed the gallant General. But, the journal goes on to say that, deplorable as the discrimination against Japanese immigrants is as regards America, it dwindles into insignificance when compared with the cases of the colonies of their ally, Great Britain, which either refuse to apply the Anglo-Japanese treaties to their relations with Japan, or in case they are applied, make similar exceptions in the matter of immigration.

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6. In this connection the notification issued on June 7 (according to the Nichi Nichi) by Consul Saito at Honolulu to the Japanese in Hawaii, warning them against migrating to Vancouver in any numbers, is not without interest.

7. The reports received here on the 4th instant of the intention of our Government to despatch a large fleet of war vessels to the Pacific were at first contradicted and then again confirmed. In view of the relative importance of such an event, I despatched on the 8 instant a telegram of inquiry, confirmed herewith, as to the reliability of the rumors. Although the comments of the Japanese press on the subject have been uniformly calm, as shown by the extracts enclosed herewith, I have reason to think that the calmness is more or less artificial and that the movement of a large naval force to the Pacific just at this time, however unobjectionable from an American point of view, would tend to have an unfavorable effect upon the mind of the average Japanese. In this connection the remarks attributed by the Hochi Shimbun to Rear-Admiral Sakamoto, Chief of the Hydrographic Bureau of the Navy Department, are doubtless exaggerated. It is probable, however, that he has made some remarks, not altogether creditable to the American Navy, which were not meant for publication but which furnished the basis of the reported interview. I am also informed on good authority that the views concerning the personnel of the American Navy, attributed to Admiral Sakamoto, are not uncommon in Japanese naval circles, although I cannot vouch for the truth of such a statement from my personal observation.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Luna C. Wright

Enclosures.

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Enclosures:

- (1) Copies of representations from the Japanese Chambers of Commerce to the President and the principal Chambers of Commerce of the United States.
- (2) Clippings from the Japan Mail of July 1, 3 and 6.
- (3) Extracts from the Japan Times and other papers relating to the alleged discrimination against Japanese at San Francisco in the matter of licenses.
- (4) Explanation given out by Mr. Ishii of the Foreign Office; comment of Mr. Kato in the Nichi Nichi Shimbun.
- (5) Comment of the Asahi Shimbun in connection with General Kuroki's return.
- (6) Notification issued by the Japanese Consul at Honolulu with respect to emigration to Vancouver.
- (7) Telegraphic reports of the despatch of the battle-ship squadron to the Pacific.
- (8) Confirmation of cipher telegram to the Department dated July 8.
- (9) Newspaper comment on the question of the despatch of an American squadron to the Pacific.
- (10) Rear-Admiral Sakamoto's comments on the same subject.